

**SWITCH SELECTION MECHANISM FOR A SWITCH POOL
IN A WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK**

ABSTRACT

[0043] Disclosed are systems and methods for associating querying switches with responsive access nodes in a telecommunications network (10) having a switch pool (18). The methods include techniques for assigning a switch (12) of the switch pool (18) as a handling switch for queries received from the plurality of access nodes (14). The handling switch directs queries to respective target access nodes (14). The handling switch also receives responses from target access nodes. Techniques are provided for reassignment of the handling switch from among switches (12) of the switch pool (18) on the basis of various criteria such as, for example load or transaction count. Examples of the invention in the context of a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) network (10) having a Mobile Switching Center (MSC) pool (18) are described.

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